

# FRONTLINE Forward



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Spc. Adam Nuelken

*An M1A1 Abrams from A Company, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor lays fire down range during 2nd Brigade's live-fire exercise, held Dec. 21-23.*

## Spartans roll out to largest Army exercise since Gulf War

**Spc. Jacob Boyer**  
*Staff Writer*

More than 4,000 soldiers from 2nd Brigade and other elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (Mech.) moved into the final stage of their brigade-level exercise when they held their first live-fire battle Dec. 21 at the Udairi Range Complex in Kuwait.

"I believe this is the largest Army exercise since Operation Desert Storm," said Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III, commander, 3<sup>rd</sup> Inf. Div. (Mech.), Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. "An entire brigade with over 70 tanks and 70 Bradleys is here, and we have division command and control over everything."

Although other brigade-size elements have held exercises here in the past decade, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Inf. Div. (Mech.)'s tactical operations center makes the force larger than normal, Blount said. The division staff recently acquired several new command and control vehicles and wanted to take the opportunity to exercise them here, he said.

Prior to the exercise, which took place 13 kilometers east of Kuwait's border with Iraq, Air Force and Army aircraft conducted shaping operations, said Lt. Col. Charles Niles,

secretary for the commanding general's staff. The brigade was moving in to face a force of two battalions, and they wanted to try to knock down the opposing force's numbers a little.

"We like the odds to be three to one," he said. "So we use the attack aircraft to make the odds more to our liking."

The brigade then rolled out across nearly 600 square kilometers of open desert with several tasks before it. As they moved, Paladin howitzers from 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment opened up with preparatory fires down the range, Niles said.

After moving down range, the force came across an obstacle that included mines, concertina and a trench and bunker system. Engineers from the 10<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion moved in their equipment to breach through the obstacle. They fired several mine-clearing line charges into the obstacles before the first mine plows rolled through.

Soldiers from 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment got into the action when the ramps were dropped on their Bradley fighting vehicles. Their task was to clear the trenches and bunkers of enemies before moving on.

**See Spartans, page 6**

## Neutralizing the threat

## 92nd Chem cleans up at exercise

Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke  
Editor

Keeping the soldiers on the battlefield – when it all comes down to it, that's the overall mission of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Chemical Company.

The unit's soldiers are trained in every necessary procedure to ensure soldiers who have come in contact with chemical agents are quickly and thoroughly decontaminated and returned to their positions on the battlefield.

And that is exactly what they practiced during a decontamination training exercise held Dec. 15 near Camp New York. "The object of this exercise is to get soldiers familiar with decontamination procedures," explained 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Stanley Lay, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment's chemical officer. "The soldiers take this very seriously, and it's important that they have the opportunity to maintain their skills."

The exercise consisted of five main stages, each significant to the overall decontamination process, according to Staff Sgt. Joseph Baptista, a chemical operations specialist with the 92<sup>nd</sup>.

After receiving a briefing at the pre-staging area, soldiers move their vehicles to the first stage, which consists of checking the vehicle with a chemical agent monitor.

The vehicle is then sprayed down and checked for additional contamination. If there is any residual contamination left, it is scrubbed off and the vehicle is sprayed once more.

At station two the vehicles are sprayed with DS2, a chemical neutral-



Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke

Pfc. Kimberlyee Carridice, a chemical operations specialist with the 92<sup>nd</sup> Chemical Co., checks a Bradley for contamination with a chemical agent monitor.

izing agent.

The interior of the vehicle is decontaminated at station three.

After waiting for 30 minutes – the amount of time needed to neutralize chemicals inside the vehicle – soldiers then move to the fourth station, where the vehicle is thoroughly rinsed with water.

Station five consists of a final check with the chemical agent monitor.

If the vehicle is deemed contaminant-free, it is released to the post-decon staging area. If not, it is recycled back to stage two, where the process starts over again.

Although the soldiers of the 92<sup>nd</sup>

have rehearsed this drill a number of times at Fort Stewart, it is important to keep practicing, according to Sgt. Theresa Edwards, chemical operations specialist.

"It's good training for the other units because they may not be used to chemical training at this level, but it's also good practice for us too," she said.

"We have to be very knowledgeable about what we do here, because we're the last line between the soldier getting back to the battle," Baptista said. "If we can't do our job here, then soldiers lose time on the battlefield. So we have to make sure we're properly trained and that everyone here knows his or her job."

### Frontline Forward

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Spc. Adam Nuelken

Sgt. 1st Class Eric Olson stands atop his tank wearing the CVC cover he wore during the Gulf War. Olson's tank is named for the American Airlines Flight 77 plane that struck the Pentagon, Sept. 11, 2001.

## Gulf War vet returns to Kuwait

**Spc. Adam Nuelken**  
Staff Writer

Over 10 years ago, Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Eric Olson was a 19-year-old driver on an M1A1 Abrams when he came to the Middle East to fight for the liberation of Kuwait.

Now, with the possibility of war on the horizon, he is back as a tank commander and platoon sergeant with A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 64<sup>th</sup> Armor.

"When I first came back, I was kind of fearful about being (here)," he said. "Now, I feel more confident about being back here. I feel stronger this time than last time.

"More than anything, I thought I would have relapses of some of the sights I saw during the Gulf War," he added.

But with his war experience, Olson provides a certain "know-how" to his soldiers.

"I think more than anything it's trust," he said. "They know that I've been here, and I know what I'm doing. I don't know if my past will give them an edge, but it will definitely give them insightfulness of what may be ahead."

Olson's experiences during the war only make up a portion of what he has learned. He also accredits his knowledge to Army schools and 2nd Brigade's live-fire exercise held recently.

"Along with lessons learned by going to war, I feel (better trained) by going through Army schools," he added. "(The live-fire) is the most realistic training I've gotten apart from coming over here to liberate Kuwait the first time."

With a concern on the soldiers' minds, Olson feels they are better off than ever.

"If we ever roll north, there is a high probability we will be the lead platoon," he added. "That's a lot of trust that all the processes and people are moving in

the right direction, but these guys are probably more ready than ever before.

"The first time we came here to liberate Kuwait. Now, if the country asks us, it is to liberate Iraq," he said.

Olson's crew feels ready and has confidence in his leadership not because of his wartime experience but also from training.

"I have a lot of confidence that my leaders know what they are doing, and we will return safe," said Pfc. Andrew Burt, Olson's driver. "I think above all we have to be confident in our jobs. You're always a little bit on the edge, but the training has made me feel a lot more confident in what we do and how we do it. I'm glad to be a part of 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, and we're going to get home soon."

Olson has returned to Kuwait this time to participate in Operation Desert Spring, but he knows and is ready for what may lie ahead.



# Desert Rogues put skills to test in brigade livefire

**Spc. Adam Nuelken**  
Staff Writer

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team moved out to the desert to conduct a brigade live-fire, Dec. 20-23.

During this live-fire exercise, the brigade utilized AH-64 Apaches and Division Artillery fires to accomplish their goals in what was declared the biggest exercise since the Gulf War.

"Out here we've gotten a whole lot of assets. Really it's getting a whole lot of team players out here we don't normally get to work with," said Capt. Andy Hilmes, commander of A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 64<sup>th</sup> Armor.

"These guys don't always get a chance to do this. The training we've done out here is probably more than what most units get in two years."

Hilmes commands a company that is made up of two tank platoons and a mechanized infantry platoon.

This arrangement gives the company more assets and more lethality on the battlefield.

"If I'm a tank company pure, I will have a difficult time clearing trenches," he added. "If they're an infantry company pure, and they run into a tank, they're gonna' have a hard time."

During the live-fire, the brigade performed a daytime live-fire and a nighttime live-fire. Each mission was on a different lane and had different obstacles.

"The difference between the two for us is the day fire had a breach," Hilmes said. The night fire was a longer distance and had turning maneuvers and flanking attacks.

"They require different levels of coordination. Night fire coordination becomes more important," he said.

The training was a great asset for both the tankers and infantrymen who participated in it, according to Sgt. James Kelly, a squad leader with C Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry.

"This training is very important. It tells whether or not the guys got the training if we go north," he said. "If I take them to combat, and if I get hit,

they can continue on without me. It's played a very big factor to see if they can get down range and fire live rounds over their buddy without hitting them. It

builds trust and confidence."

While the infantry played a big role in clearing trenches, the tankers provided cover and used their weapons, advantages to overwhelm the enemy.

"I tried to engage (the enemy) at my max effective range. I know I have better equipment than them, and I am going to try and use that to my advantage," Hilmes said.

Although the training for the brigade proved invaluable, they still had to face the hardships of the desert on their equipment throughout the exercise.

A Co., 1-64 Ar. returned to Camp Pennsylvania after the exercise to begin maintenance on their equipment to ready it for the next mission.

(Editor's Note: Photos included in this article feature many of the units that participated in the live-fire exercise, to include A Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, B Company, 10<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 64<sup>th</sup> Armor Regiment, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.)



Spc. Jacob Boyer  
Spc. Elias Vargas, from Puerto Rico, stretches barbed wire to mark a breach lane with B Company, 10<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion.



Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke  
A group of Bradleys rush forward to the next objective during 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade's daytime live-fire, held Dec. 21.



Spc. Adam Nuelken  
An M1A1 Abrams goes airborne over a berm during 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade's daytime live-fire.



Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke  
Soldiers with A Company, 3-15 Infantry advance forward during the dismounted portion of the live-fire.



Spc. Adam Nuelken  
A mine clearing line charge is fired during the live-fire exercise.

## Company-level training

## Infantry takes out enemy strong points

Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke  
Editor

After about three weeks of company and battalion-level training in the Kuwaiti desert, the soldiers of A Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment proved their mettle during 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade's live-fire exercise, held Dec. 21-23.

The unit's mission consisted of eliminating the threat of enemy ground troops to the armored units, according to Capt. Chris Carter, A Co. commander.

But before the soldiers could demonstrate their proficiencies at the brigade live-fire, they had to test their skills at the lower-echelon levels first.

"We've been out here for about three weeks. We started out doing some company-level training and situational exercises mainly focused on maneuver," Carter said. "We have had some great infantry action getting the infantry squads down on the ground and destroying strong points."

Carter said the event was a good opportunity, mainly because there were no disruptions to prevent the soldiers from focusing on the exercise.

"It's been a wonderful training opportunity, because we don't have the distractors here like we do in the rear. There's no TV to interfere, or people worrying about going back to eat at Popeyes," he said.

"We're able to focus solely on training, and even the time that we're not training, the squad leaders have ample time to sit their soldiers down and go over individual level training. So it's a great opportunity and we're taking advantage of it."

Carter went on to explain the specific details of his company's role in the live-fire.

"Since we're an infantry unit attached to an armor battalion, we're mainly focused on taking away the in-



Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke

*Spc. Zachary Watkins, a Bradley driver with A Co., 3-7th Infantry loads 25 mm high explosive rounds in preparation for 2nd Brigade's night live-fire exercise.*

fantry threat to the armor," he said. "We will destroy enemy strong points and take away the threat that is posed by shoulder-fired or other wired-guided missiles fired from enemy infantry on the ground."

Spc. Dean Bryant, a Bradley driver with A Co., said the training was a unique experience.

"I've never experienced any training like this before," he said. "I've talked to a lot of guys and they say that this training is a lot better than (the National Training Center), because here you've got the company, battalion and the brigade training all at one time. At NTC it's a lot smaller and you can't do that."

Overall, Carter said he was pleased with the soldier's performance during

the training event.

"Our company was picked to come over here with 2nd Brigade for the specific reason that we are a great company – we have great soldiers, great noncommissioned officers and great platoon leaders in this company," he explained. "I feel very confident in their ability to fight. Once we got over here, the level of training soared tremendously. I'm extremely proud of them."

Carter further pointed out that if called, his soldiers would be prepared to go to war.

"The infantry soldiers in my company joined the Army to get on the ground and to fight and win our nation's wars, and they're ready to do it – they're motivated, and we'll do the job we came here to do," he said.





Spc. Adam Nuelken

Santa Claus takes time out of his busy day on Christmas to help 2nd Brigade Combat Team commanders pull gate guard on Camp New York.



Spc. Jacob Boyer

(Left to right) 1st Lt. Nicholas Kaffeld, Lincoln, Neb., Capt. Edward Ballanco, Tallahassee, Fla., Capt. Christopher Nixon, Woodstow, N.J., and Capt. Phil Wolford, Columbus, Ohio serve the soldiers at 4-64 Armor's dining facility.

## Christmas in Kuwait



Spc. Adam Nuelken

Spc. Stephen Watson, a Coleman, Texas native, receives a present from Sheila Gittens, the director of Operation Christmas Basket.



Spc. Jacob Boyer

Spc. Ruben Hester, San Diego, Calif., Spc. Ryan Haviland, Tampa, Fla., and Staff Sgt. Marion Jacobs, Dale City, Va., dig into Christmas dinner at The Marne Cafe.

### Spartans, from page 1

"My squad was excellent out there," said Sgt. Christopher Porterfield of Ukiah, Calif., a squad leader with 3-15 Infantry. "They're highly trained. I'd have to say our specialty's probably clearing a trench."

The soldiers of 2nd Brigade have been working hard during their deployment, Blount said. But the reward is a greater level of cohesion for the brigade combat team in the event of a real conflict.

"The soldiers are more focused," he said. "They watch

the news and know there is a possibility for war. We're building confidence in our soldiers as a team and in the leadership."

The ultimate benefit of the training is that if the current situation with Iraq turns to war, the soldiers are ready, Blount said.

"The soldiers are developing a really confident combat team," Blount said. "No one wishes for a war, but if we have to fight, we are prepared."

## Spiritual Fitness

# Attaining goals without losing all

**Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Roger Heath**  
Division Chaplain

The National Training Center has a variety of ways to measure success. If a unit totally dominates the opposition force, that is considered a win.

If a certain percentage of combat vehicles fight their way through to the objective, that too is considered a win.

However, if things get really desperate and only the maintenance track makes it to the objective with a couple guys and their personal weapon, that also could be considered a *Pyrrhic win* (a victory won at excessive cost).

The goal is to get to the objective with as much combat power as possible. However, if during the battle, a unit's combat capability is completely attrited, they may not be able to sustain momentum even if they "take the hill"—much like "Pickett's Charge" at Gettysburg, where Pickett's men crossed the battlefield, made it over the stone wall, but had no combat power left to remain on the objective.

Life also has its battles and objectives. People have goals they want to attain. They work to earn degrees, position, wealth, awards, promotions or a variety of other accomplishments to meet some inner need or desire.

None of those are inherently bad. In fact, most of their desires are noble. However, there are costs to be paid for these wishes.

Life's battles also can attrite the power, ability and energy of those striving to achieve their noble goals. After all, if it

were easy, anyone could do it.

So, how do you take the objective without losing everything in the attempt? This is the challenge everyone faces. We have one life, one body, and one chance to get to the objective.

Some, however, are not even sure what the objective is. They are fighting their way through life without meaning. Purposeless, powerless and pointless they fight for some unknown reason or some unknown goal. Exhausted from their struggle, they become easy targets for the OPFOR of their soul.

A Middle Eastern man once said, "*Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, take my yoke upon you and I will give you rest.*" He said a lot more things that drew attention to his hidden meanings. It's been a purpose, a goal and objective of mine to discover some of the hidden meanings of His words.

I'm not interested in fighting my way through life just to take a worthless objective, or to be so totally worn down after getting to the top, I've no energy left for life.

"Maintenance track on the objective" may be a win for some, but doesn't it seem a bit shallow? Maybe it's the wrong objective or perhaps it's just not worth fighting for.

Perhaps we might need to look for the meaning of our spiritual struggle.

Pointless, powerless and purposeless living is not attractive to me. I'll keep looking to the **One** calling us to a higher level of living. See you at the top.

## Maintaining relations

*Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount, III, commanding general, 3rd Inf. Div. (Mech.), Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, talks with Kuwaiti Brig. Gen. Khalid Al-Ameeri, commander, 26th Brigade, during 2nd Brigade's live-fire exercise Dec. 21.*



Spc. Jacob Boyer

# Marne Scoreboard

## NCAA Football

### Bowl Scores

#### Dec. 23

##### Tangerine Bowl

Texas Tech 55, Clemson 15

#### Dec. 25

##### Las Vegas Bowl

UCLA 27, New Mexico 13

##### Hawaii Bowl

Tulane 36, Hawaii 28

#### Thursday

##### Motor City Bowl

Boston College 51, Toledo 25

##### Insight Bowl

Pitt 38, Oregon St. 13

#### Friday

##### Houston Bowl

Oklahoma St. 33, Southern Miss 23

##### Independence Bowl

Mississippi 27, Nebraska 23

##### Holiday Bowl

Kansas St. 34, Arizona St. 27

#### Saturday

##### Continental Tire Bowl

Virginia 48, West Virginia 22

##### Alamo Bowl

Wisconsin 31, Colorado 28

## NFL

#### Dec. 21

Minnesota 20, Miami 17

Philadelphia 27, Dallas 3

San Francisco 17, Arizona 14

#### Dec. 22

Washington 26, Houston 10

Carolina 24, Chicago 14

Atlanta 36, Detroit 15

Cincinnati 20, New Orleans 13

Green Bay 10, Buffalo 0

NY Giants 44, Indianapolis 27

Kansas City 24, San Diego 22

Seattle 30, St. Louis 10

NY Jets 30, New England 17

Cleveland 14, Baltimore 13

Oakland 28, Denver 16

#### Dec. 23

Pittsburgh 17, Tampa Bay 7

## NBA

#### Friday

Atlanta 81, San Antonio 79

Indiana 113, Cleveland 89

Miami 90, Boston 70

New Jersey 110, Milwaukee 90

Memphis 99, Orlando 86

Minnesota 113, Chicago 100

New York 99, Houston 83

LA Clippers 108, Phoenix 95

Golden State 101, Toronto 96

Portland 103, Utah 98

#### Saturday

Indiana 91, New Orleans 84

Orlando 101, Boston 95

Washington 84, Atlanta 76

Detroit 106, Minnesota 82

San Antonio 109, Chicago 95

Dallas 107, New York 82

New Jersey 104, Milwaukee 96

LA Lakers 112, Denver 93

Portland 119, Sacramento 113

Utah 98, Philadelphia 69

Golden State 99, LA Clippers 92

## NHL

#### Friday

Atlanta 5, Carolina 3

Ottawa 3, Montreal 2

Washington 3, New Jersey 2

Tampa Bay 5, Boston 2

Dallas 4, Florida 0

Philadelphia 2, Colorado 1

Toronto 4, Calgary 3

#### Saturday

Minnesota 4, Buffalo 3

NY Islanders 3, Carolina 0

Pittsburgh 3, Montreal 2

Boston 1, Atlanta 0

St. Louis 6, Columbus 1

NY Rangers 2, Florida 1

New Jersey 2, Washington 1

Detroit 4, Nashville 2

Phoenix 4, Philadelphia 0

Edmonton 3, Toronto 2

Vancouver 7, Anaheim 3

Chicago 3, San Jose 3

## NCAA Basketball

#### Men's Top 25

##### Friday

Iona 65, (23) UNC 56

##### Saturday

(6) UConn 93, Central Co. 65

Louisville 81, (14) Kentucky 63

(17) Miss. St. 54, (5) Oklahoma 45

(13) Florida 99, Beth. Cookman 64

(12) Marquette 105, Grambling 74

Iowa 67, (21) Tulsa 63

(19) Kansas 80, California 67

(2) Pitt 65, George Mason 41

Temple 71, (11) Indiana 64

(9) Oregon 108, UC-Riverside 67

(25) Texas Tech 99, Minnesota 89

(4) Arizona 95, Davidson 69

Memphis 77, (7) Illinois 74

(15) Mich. St. 76, Jacksonville St. 52

(20) Xavier 84, E. Kentucky 60

(23) UNC 63, St. John's 59

#### Women's Top 25

##### Friday

Georgia Tech 65, (22) Georgia 61

(18) South Carolina 57, Temple 39

(1) Duke 92, Detroit 52

(7) Stanford 80, Arizona St. 63

(21) Arizona 83, California 53

##### Saturday

(11) Minnesota 88, Wright St. 54

(5) Tennessee 77, (12) ND 61

(3) LSU 76, (15) Texas 58

(9) Arkansas 71, W. Kentucky 61

(4) Kansas St. 63, N. Illinois 58

(19) Boston College 67, SMU 57

(10) Texas Tech 86, South. Miss. 62

(20) Oklahoma 87, SE Miss. St. 59

(2) UConn 72, S. Florida 56

TCU 70, (8) Vanderbilt 53

Utah 69, (14) Mississippi St. 65

(16) Penn State 96, Kent St. 68

## Dallas looking for a coach

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones and Bill Parcells met Friday to discuss football and, more specifically, the possibility of "The Tuna" returning to the NFL after a three-season hiatus.

But Parcells may not be the lone high-profile candidate Jones is considering for a job that is not yet officially vacant. Jones has also spoken to former Minnesota Vikings head coach Dennis Green at least once earlier this week about the job.

## Irish LB arrested

Notre Dame linebacker Chad DeBolt was charged with trespassing Friday after he was accused of causing a disturbance at a nightclub and refusing to leave.

The 22-year-old was asked several times to leave the club but refused.

The case is under investigation.

## Chamberlain record falls

Wilt Chamberlain's Philadelphia high school career scoring record fell Friday when Maureece Rice sank a 3-pointer with 1:52 left in a tournament consolation game.

The 18-year-old senior at Strawberry Mansion High School finished with 44 points, pushing his four-year total to 2,209. Chamberlain had 2,206 during his three-year varsity career.

## Rat interrupts Utah game

A rat was thrown onto the court by an unknown fan and briefly interrupted the Utah Jazz's 98-69 win over the Philadelphia 76ers Saturday night.

The rat almost stole the scene in an ugly game that included 41 turnovers, 100 missed shots and 42 fouls.

"People do all kinds of crazy stuff out there," Utah's Karl Malone said. "Nothing surprises me anymore."

## Raptors may trade Carter

The Toronto Raptors are discussing a trade with the Cleveland Cavaliers that would send Vince Carter to Cleveland for Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Darius Miles.

The Raptors have grown frustrated with Carter's work ethic in rehabbing from knee injuries over the past year and his lethargy in practices. Carter reportedly is unhappy in Toronto and would welcome the change of scenery.

## Calgary hires Sutter

Darryl Sutter was hired as the coach of Calgary Saturday and made his debut on Sunday night against Anaheim. He was fired by San Jose Dec. 1 after an 8-12-2-2 start.

Calgary fired Greg Gilbert Dec. 3. Gilbert was in his second full season as coach after taking over the team in March 2001, when Don Hay was fired.